

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, AR

SUBJ: ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN CONGRESSIONAL
TESTIMONY.

REF: BUENOS AIRES 6332

. AT A HEARING OF THE HOUSE SUB COMMITTEE ON INTER-
AMERICAN AFFAIRS ON AUGUST 19, HA DEPUTY ASSISTANT
SECRETARY DERIAN, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, ADDRESSED THE
HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. THE FOCUS OF THE
HEARING WAS THE IMPACT OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES ON ARMS
TRANSFERS IN THE HEMISPHERE. TESTIMONY FOLLOWS:

2. REP. J. HERBERT BURKE (R-FLA.) LED DERIAN INTO A
DISCUSSION OF ARGENTINA BY STATING THAT HE HAD BEEN
ADVISED BY CHILEAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THAT MANY PERSONS
COUNTED AS DISAPPEARED IN CHILE WERE IN FACT SUBVERSIVES
WHO HAD DELIBERATELY SLIPPED OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON FALSE

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PASSPORTS, IN -ORDER TO SOW CONFUSION AS TO THEIR WHERE-
ABOUTS. HE IMPLIED THAT THIS WAS ALSO THE CASE IN MANY
OF THE ARGENTINE DISAPPEARANCE CASES. HE SAID THE ARGEN-
TINE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SIMILARLY SAY THEY HAD ONLY
BEEN CLAMPING DOWN ON TERRORISM, AND THAT COMMUNISTS
AND TERRORISTS HAD NO CLAIM TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN
RIGHTS.

3. DERIAN RESPONDED THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAD BROKEN THE BACK OF THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS. BURKE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD DIFFERENTLY BY GOA OFFICIALS AND NOTED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON A CODEL VISIT HE WAS INVOLVED IN LAST YEAR. DERIAN REITERATED THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAS ACKNOWLEDGED PUBLICLY THAT, EXCEPT FOR SMALL GROUPS, TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS AS A WHOLE, HAVE BEEN BROKEN. SHE QUOTED THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH TO THE OASGA IN 1977 TO THE EFFECT THAT "IF TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE IN THE NAME OF DISSENT CANNOT BE CONDONED, NEITHER CAN VIOLENCE THAT IS OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED. . .THE SUREST WAY TO DEFEAT TERRORISM IS TO PROMOTE. . .JUSTICE IN OUR SOCIETIES."

4. RETURNING TO BURKE'S STATEMENT THAT PERSONS HAD ARRANGED THEIR OWN DISAPPEARANCES, DERIAN SAID THAT WHILE EXACT NUMBERS MIGHT BE UNCERTAIN, THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION AT ALL THAT THOUSANDS HAD DISAPPEARED IN ARGENTINA AND MANY HUNDREDS IN CHILE. SHE ADMITTED THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME SUBVERSIVES MIGHT HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF CONDITIONS TO GO UNDERGROUND BUT SAID IT WAS BEYOND DISPUTE THAT PERSONS HAD DISAPPEARED IN ARGENTINA. BURKE STATED HE DID NOT WANT TO DENY THE EXISTENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ARGENTINA.

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5. CHAIRMAN GUS YATRON (D-PA.) ASKED HOW WE HAVE ENCOURAGED IMPROVEMENTS IN ARGENTINA. DERIAN SAID WE WERE IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT, AND THAT WE KEPT THEM FULLY INFORMED ABOUT OUR ATTITUDES.

6. IN RESPONSE TO ANOTHER YATRON QUESTION, DERIAN PROVIDED A BRIEF RUNDOWN OF THE PRESENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA, CITING CONTINUING ABDUCTIONS, DETENTIONS WITHOUT CHARGE AND EXECUTIONS. SHE CITED POSITIVELY THE RELEASE OF PEN NAMES AND THE RESTORATION OF THE RIGHT OF OPTION, NOTING ITS MINIMAL USE THUS FAR, AND VOICED HOPE THAT THE IAHRC VISIT WOULD FINALLY BE SCHEDULED. BUT IN GENERAL, SHE STATED, THE PICTURE WAS BLEAK. SHE THEN CITED, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, THE STATE DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE ON THE EX-IM TRANSACTIONS.

7. IN ANSWER TO OTHER QUESTIONS, SHE AGREED TO PROVIDE A SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION IN COLOMBIA FOR THE RECORD, EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE EVOLUTION TOWARD DEMOCRACY IN PERU WOULD BRING ABOUT A REDUCTION THEIR ARMS PURCHASES, AND DECLINED TO SPECULATE ON STEPS THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN AGAINST CHILE IF THAT GOVERNMENT DOES NOT COOPERATE FURTHER IN THE

LETELIER CASE. VANCE

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